

Frequently Asked Questions

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Why should my organization apply for the incentive fund?

- ▶ The incentive fund is one of many benefits the Supply Chain Automation Workforce Hub (Hub) offers to Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) sponsors and employers.
- ▶ The fund helps sponsors/employers offset the costs of launching RAPs, providing training to apprentices, and supporting resources and tools that are not available for free such as tuition for Related Training Instruction, training for mentors, and training equipment. Therefore, the incentive fund supports sponsors/employers to grow existing and develop new RAPs.

Is there any help available for filling out the application form?

Yes, the Hub has a **Help Desk** with staff who can answer questions and assist sponsors/employers in completing the application. To access the **Help Desk**, email us at SCAWorkforceHub@manhattanstrategy.com.

How does the incentive fund work?

Incentive Funds is used selectively.

- ▶ The incentive amount varies based on the number of apprentices the sponsor/employer commits to enroll (see questions concerning [Maximum](#) and [Minimum](#) amounts).
- ▶ Each applicant submits an application that is reviewed by the Hub subject matter experts.
- ▶ Funds are available for tools and activities that assist in apprentice recruitment, retention, completion, and placement.
- ▶ The applicant must explain how the funds are connected to the apprentice.
- ▶ Before an applicant is approved, the Hub team discusses their needs and current resources.
- ▶ When the application is approved, the applicant signs a letter of commitment. Next, they provide the Hub team with the Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Database System (RAPIDS) ID numbers, relevant financial documents, and demographic information for their enrolled apprentices, and then Manhattan Strategy Group (MSG) allocates a one-time disbursement of funds directly to the sponsors/employers.
- ▶ The Hub schedules regular check-in calls for sponsors/employers to provide updates on the use of the funds and discuss technical assistance needs.
- ▶ The Hub team helps sponsors/employers develop and implement sustainability plans.

What are the application deadlines for the incentive fund?

Applications are considered on a rolling basis between **January 15 and November 1, 2023**.

How many apprentices does each organization need to commit to qualify for the maximum funding amount?

- ▶ The maximum incentive is \$30,000 per sponsor/employer, per year.
- ▶ The amount of the incentive varies based on the number of apprentices (up to \$1,000 per apprentice for new sponsors/employers or occupations and up to \$500 per apprentice for additional apprenticeship cohorts for existing sponsors/employers, based on justified need) the sponsor/employer commits to enroll. New sponsors/employers or occupations must commit to enrolling 30 or more apprentices during the calendar year to receive the maximum amount. Existing sponsors/employers must commit to enrolling 60 or more apprentices during the calendar year to receive the maximum amount.

How many apprentices does each organization need to commit to qualify for the minimum funding amount?

There is no minimum number of apprentices each organization needs to commit to qualify for incentive funding.

Is an education institution/workforce development board/industry association eligible to receive incentive funds if that organization is the RAP sponsor?

Yes, an education institution/workforce development board/industry association is eligible to receive incentive funds if that organization is designated as the RAP sponsor. Sponsors can include employers, joint labor management organizations, industry associations, education institutions, or other partners included in a multi-employer partnership.

Can my organization receive incentive funds each year for the same apprentices?

- ▶ No, each organization will receive a one-time incentive payout for each apprentice at the start of the RAP (they must provide an assigned RAPIDS ID number) before December 15 of the application year.
- ▶ For new apprentices, organizations may submit a new application each year.
- ▶ The application process will be significantly truncated after the first application is successful. A member of the Hub team will assist each organization in reapplying.

Can my organization apply each year for new apprentices?

- ▶ Yes, if an organization adds new apprentices to an existing RAP or develops a new RAP with new apprentices under a different occupational code, they may apply for additional incentive funds.
- ▶ Incentive funds must be dispersed and encumbered by December 15.
- ▶ If an organization is interested in receiving incentive funds for more than 1 year, it must submit a new application each year for new apprentices.
- ▶ The application process will be significantly truncated after the first application is successful. A member of the Hub team will assist the organization in reapplying.

If one or more apprentices drop out after my organization received incentive funds, do those funds need to be returned to the Hub?

No, if an apprentice drops out of the program, but they were registered in RAPIDS and have a RAPIDS ID number, the organization does not have to return the funds. The incentive funds are predicated on apprentice enrollment only.

What if the structure of my organization's RAP changes after the letter of commitment is signed and the details in the letter are no longer accurate?

Upon any substantive changes in the RAP, the organization must inform a member of the Hub team, who will schedule a call to discuss the changes. A new letter of commitment will be drafted and must be signed to disperse any incentive funds.

Can funds be used for tuition that a college provides for Related Training Instruction?

Yes, funds can be used for tuition, classroom education, or online training for apprentices.

Are incentive funds paid directly to the sponsor of the RAP?

- ▶ Incentive funds are paid directly to the applicant. If the RAP sponsor applies for the incentive funds, the sponsor receives the funds. If an employer that is not also a sponsor applies for the incentive funds (and has the express approval from the sponsor), the employer receives the funds.
- ▶ If a sponsor has multiple employers, each employer can apply for the maximum amount of funding. However, a sponsor and its affiliated employer cannot both receive the funds for the same apprentice; incentive funds may only be distributed to one entity per enrolled apprentice. Sponsors can include employers, joint labor management organizations, industry associations, education institutions, or other partners included in a multi-employer partnership.

What is the process for receiving incentive funds after my organization's application is approved?

There are two important steps:

1. Once the application is approved, the organization will receive a letter of commitment based on the application responses and a request to provide relevant financial information. The letter of commitment must be signed by the organization and all financial documents must be filled out and returned to MSG.
2. Once an organization provides the RAPIDS ID numbers for the apprentices enrolled in the program to the Hub team, MSG processes all financial forms and allocates a one-time direct disbursement of funds for up to \$500–\$1,000 per apprentice (depending on the number of total committed apprentices and whether or not they are a new or an existing sponsor; see questions concerning [Maximum](#) and [Minimum](#) amounts).

Since incentive funds can be used to develop/design/submit a RAP for approval, how can my organization access those funds when I cannot hire apprentices until my program is registered with the federal or state apprenticeship agency?

Unfortunately, incentive funds cannot be released until apprentices are formally enrolled and have been provided RAPIDS ID numbers. Incentive funds can support RAP start-up costs only as reimbursements.

What strategies ensure the long-term sustainability of the RAPs supported with incentive funds?

- ▶ Sponsors/employers must provide details about the ways in which the incentive fund is not the sole source of funding for resources or activities in their application.
- ▶ In addition to regular communication with sponsors/employers, the Hub technical assistance team helps develop sustainability plans and connect them to organizations in their communities that can provide the resources necessary to sustain their programs.

If I am currently receiving a grant or other funding from the U.S. Department of Labor or another federal or state agency, am I also able to receive incentive funds for my RAP?

Yes, incentive funds can be used along with other grants and funding resources as long as incentive funds are used for different needs than those covered by the other funding sources. For instance, if a grant covers apprentice tuition costs, then the incentive fund needs to

offset other training costs, such as equipment, curriculum development, etc., for the same apprentice. Co-enrollment in multiple U.S. Department of Labor training grants and programs is also allowed.

How are sponsors/employers utilizing their incentive funds?

Sponsors/employers are using incentive funding in many different ways. One sponsor is purchasing equipment for a hearing-impaired apprentice and plans to expand the RAP opportunity to several more apprentices with disabilities. Others are purchasing additional Related Training Instruction at nearby community colleges, safety equipment, and training and using the funds to expand their mentor training programs. Many are also using the funds to host career fairs in order to diversify their programs to recruit apprentices from underrepresented groups such as people of color and veterans.

What assistance/support does the Hub provide to incentive fund recipients?

Technical assistance includes regular check-ins with Hub staff, peer learning opportunities for fund recipients to connect with other recipients to learn from each other and share experiences, and a variety of materials and curricula that have been demonstrated to be successful in other programs. Please review the Hub's [menu of technical assistance](#).

CONTACT INFORMATION

To learn how the Hub can help, please visit SCWorkforcehub.com or email us at SCAWorkforceHub@manhattanstrategy.com.

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